

New Zealand's Chinese Gold-Mining Heritage: (Re) Telling their Stories

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Shantytown, Chinatown, West Coast

Dragon Tails: Re-interpreting Chinese-Australian Heritage Conference
Sovereign Hill, Ballarat, Victoria, 10 October 2009.

Introduction

- Chinese gold mining history in New Zealand
 - Chinese heritage in New Zealand
 - Current (re) development of Chinese heritage
 - Research objectives
 - Reasons for the current (re) development of Chinese heritage
 - Case study: retelling the story
 - Arrowtown Chinese Settlement
 - Shantytown Chinatown
 - Who are the audiences
 - Conclusion
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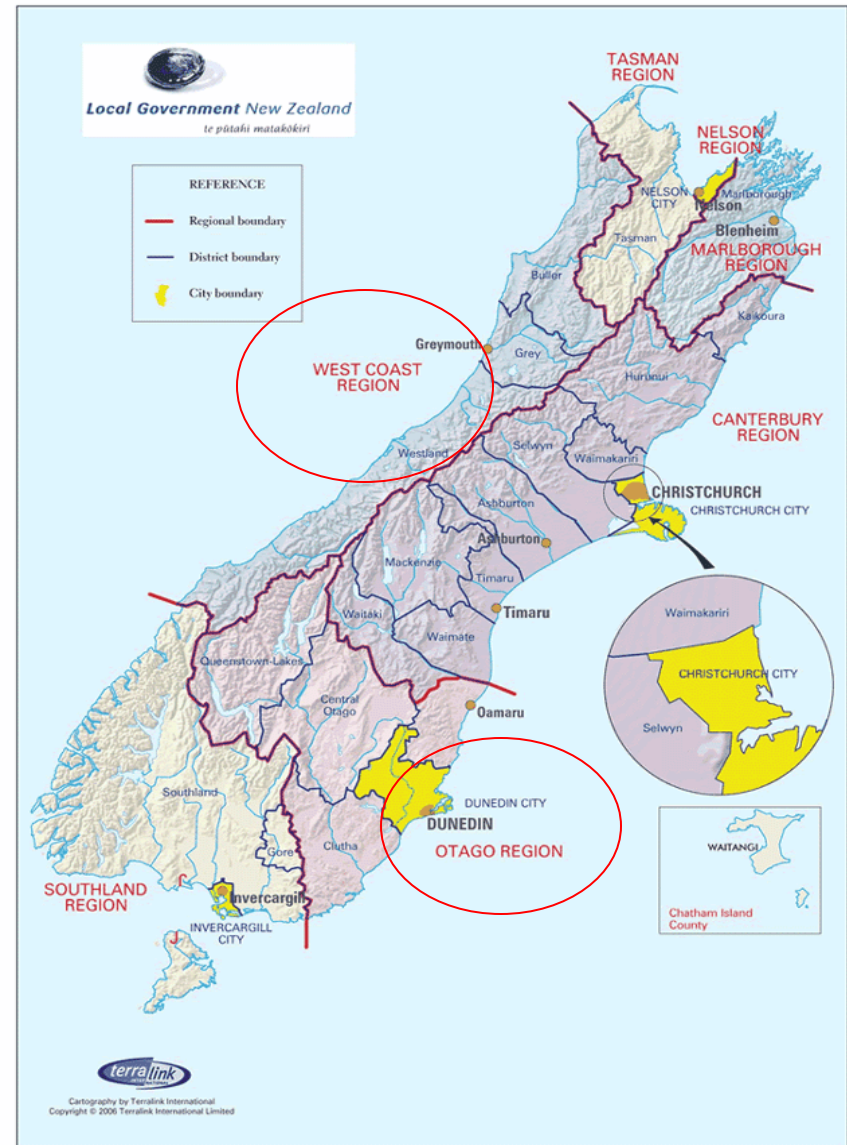
New Zealand Chinese Gold Miners

- Originally from rural area of Canton province, Southern China
- First arrived in 1865 from Victoria, Australia



New Zealand Chinese Gold Miners

- Mainly mined in Otago and the West Coast goldfield, South Island
- Other employment areas: farm laboring, market gardening, laundering and railway and road building



New Zealand Chinese Gold Miners

- Experienced hardship
- Excluded from New Zealand society
- Discriminated against
 - The Poll Tax



Chinese heritage in New Zealand

- Overlooked
- largely unknown and unacknowledged until recent decades
- Only 4 Chinese sites were registered by Historic Places Trust before 2002



Chinese headstones, Lawrence

Chinese Heritage in New Zealand

- Arrowtown Chinese Settlement in Otago
- Chinatown at Shantytown on the West Coast
- Otago Early Settler's Museum in Dunedin





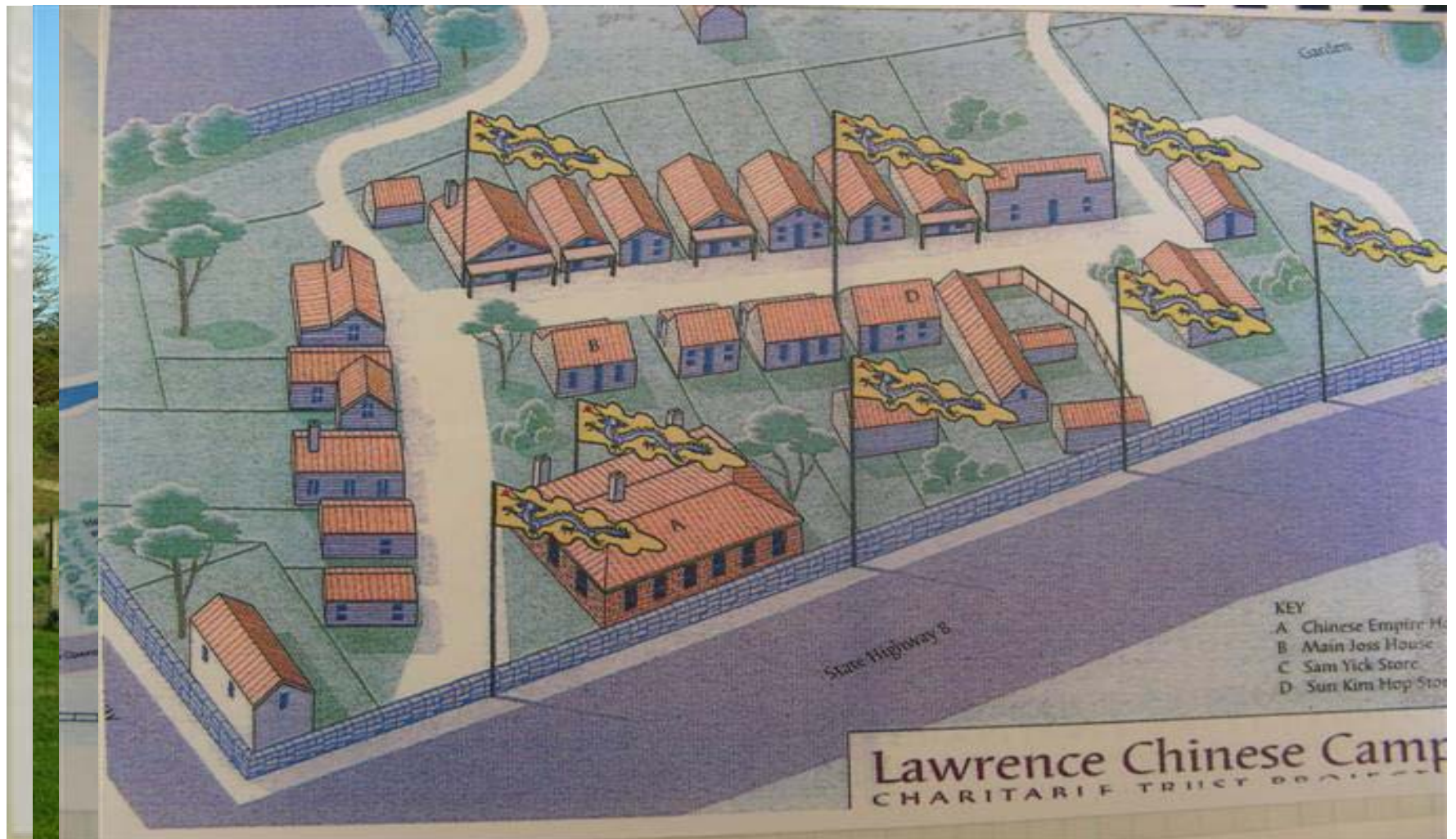
Recent (Re) Development of Chinese Heritage

- 2002 government apology
 - Establishment of Poll Tax Chinese Heritage Trust
 - \$5 million dollars fund
 - 10 sites were proposed to add to Historic Places Trust Register in 2003
 - 8 added to Register
 - Upgrade of Arrowtown Chinese Settlement
 - Redevelopment of Shantytown's Chinatown
 - Research project on the Chinese history on the West Coast
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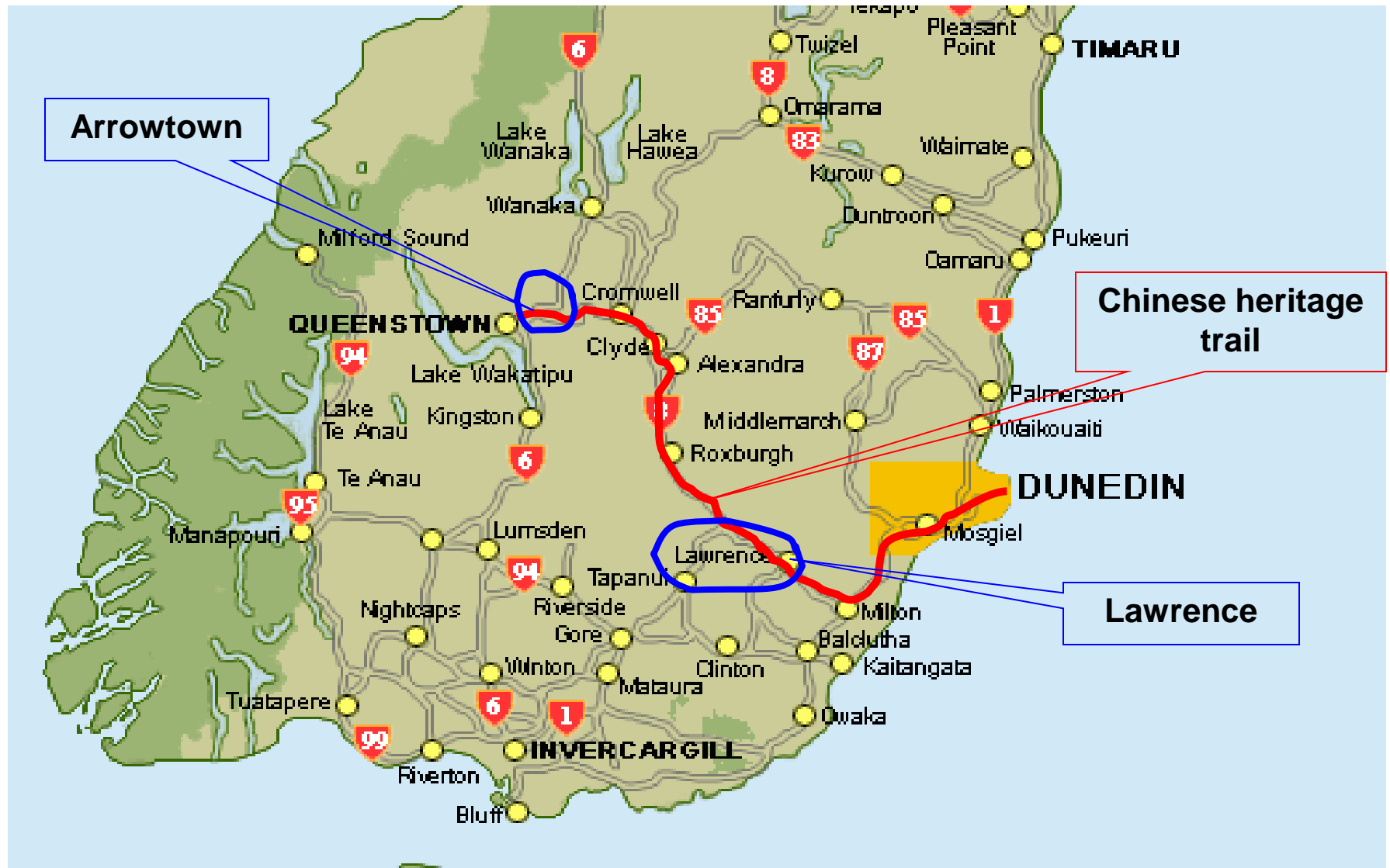
Recent (Re) Development of Chinese Heritage – Dunedin Chinese Garden



Recent (Re) Development of Chinese Heritage – Lawrence Chinese Camp



Recent (Re) Development of Chinese Heritage – Chinese Heritage Trail





Research Objectives

- To explore the reasons for current (re) development of Chinese heritage sites in New Zealand
 - To explore the tourism potential of Chinese heritage in New Zealand to both domestic and international visitors
 - To formulate appropriate suggestions for interpreting Chinese heritage to meet the needs of different groups of tourists
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Reasons for Current Interest in Chinese Heritage

- Government apology-increased awareness of Chinese history and heritage
 - General increase of New Zealanders' appreciation of history and heritage of which the Chinese are part
 - Changing focus of TNZ
 - Tourism Strategy 2010, 2015 – increasing attention on cultural tourism
 - Voice of New Zealand-Chinese
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Reasons for Current Interest in Chinese Heritage

- Change in New Zealand's social structure and economic circumstance--improving cultural awareness of New Zealanders
 - More Chinese immigrants
 - Free trade agreement
 - Increasing number of Chinese visitors to New Zealand
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Re-telling the Story of Chinese Miners – Arrowtown Chinese Settlement

- Before re-development (see photos from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/conservation/historic/by-region/arrowtown-chinese-settlement.pdf>)
- After re-development



Re-telling the Story of Chinese Miners —Shantytown' Chinatown





Discussion: Who are the Audiences?

- Domestic visitors or international visitors?
 - Chinese visitors from China?
 - Chinese in New Zealand
 - Chinese who live in New Zealand (e.g. Chinese students)
 - Chinese New Zealander
 - Visitors from other regions with Chinese background?
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Conclusions

- Chinese heritage in New Zealand is now definitely receiving more attention and is thus developing
- There is a mixture of reasons
- To which market it will appeal still remains unknown
- Further research is needed from demand perspective
 - Visitor surveys (domestic and international)